GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:997
ANSWERED ON:27.02.2006
GROWTH IN NET SOWN AREA
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether net sown area in the country has remained constant at about 142 million hectare over the past several years;

(b) if so, the reasons for failure to increase the net sown area in the country;

(c) whether the responsibilities of the Union and State Governments have been clearly defined in order to achieve 4 percent growth in agriculture sector; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the follow-up action taken to gain 4 percent growth in agriculture sector?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a) & (b): The net sown area in the country has remained at the level of 141-142 million hectares for last several years except in those years where there was deficient rainfall. Only about 40 percent of the net area sown is under assured irrigation.

(c) & (d): The development of agriculture is a State subject. However, the Union Government provides the required support for the agricultural growth in the country. The Central Government, interalia, contributes towards;

(i) stepping up public investment in agriculture and irrigation;

(ii) provisioning of research and extension services;

(iiii) strengthening of handling; storage; transport facilities at the ports/airports; farm gates for faster movement of trade transactions both within and outside the country;

(iv) ensuring adequate credit to farm house holds at easier terms and interest;

(v) incentivising agro-processing through investment friendly taxation policy;

(vi) strengthening of agriculture export zones etc.

Simultaneously, the State Governments share, among others, the responsibility of

(i) completing ongoing irrigation projects with the central loan assistance provided by the Central Scheme of Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme(AIBP);

(ii) Providing adequate State plan outlays for agriculture; livestock and fisheries;

(iii) undertaking amendments of Agricultural Produce Marketing Acts to create a lawful space for the private sector in market development and contract farming;

(iv) strengthening extension support services including State level institutional support services;

(v) using Bharat Nirman, an employment guarantee fund, for building agricultural infrastructure